

Bobbie Beth's Tidbits... English / ASL...Hand in Hand



In light of the Gallaudet Protest resulting in the termination of Jane Fernandes as the President-Designate and the recent announcement of the Interim President, Dr. Robert R. Davila, this article will be addressing common myths concerning deaf and hard of hearing people.

In our community, leaders and stakeholders alike are now beginning to discuss among themselves exactly what it means to be deaf. Myths about what it means to be deaf persist. The level of awareness within the general public must be raised to ensure that a situation like the Gallaudet Protest does not happen again. This protest was about social justice and was never about “not deaf enough.” This was an unfortunate myth perpetuated by the general media due to their lack of awareness and our inability to deal with the suaveness of media wanting sensationalism, creating many spin-offs and clouding what was really at stake during the protest. “Not deaf enough” was never the issue.

Another common myth that still persists today; “deaf and hard of hearing people can read lips proficiently.” First of all...statistics show that even the BEST lip-reader only clearly identifies 30-40% of the words that they see. The rest of the message must be assumed with “context guessing”...meaning they do their best to figure out what the rest of the words must have been. Lip-reading is a highly complex SKILL that some deaf or hard of hearing people accrue while others never master it. Some words look exactly

the same... i.e., the words “ate” and “eight” and lead to misunderstanding. Lip-readers become experts at filling in the blanks and far too much is left to guesswork.

There is good reason that not EVERYONE in the Deaf community should be expected to learn how to lip-read and speak. Not everyone is a great candidate to be lip-read either. Imagine the stuffy types that talk through their teeth and barely move their lips at all. Speech is also a skill that not EVERYONE can master. It's almost like asking a hearing person to become verbally fluent in a foreign language through the exclusive use of printed text. If you can't hear it, then it is nearly impossible to know if you are producing it correctly.

It is also a myth that hearing aids and cochlear implants completely correct hearing loss. In reality, the most powerful device available will never result in normal hearing. Hearing aids and cochlear implants are tools used to augment sound; they are not cures for hearing loss.

This is the same analogy as people wearing eyeglasses. It's true that eyeglasses correct a visual problem, so many people assume that wearing a hearing aid or having a cochlear implant corrects the hearing problem and that is simply not the case.

I want to share with you how the Gallaudet Protest experience affected me personally. Because I have always been concerned about social justice; success of women, equal employment, support for those in need....and especially educational

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achievement for deaf and hard of hearing children, I related quickly to the goals of this protest. Gallaudet students participated in the protest because it was, always was, about social justice. Over the years many issues developed at Gallaudet that needed to be addressed: Racism and Audism (discrimination toward deaf and hard of hearing persons) are two of those issues. Another issue seems to be, the misconception about American Sign Language (ASL) and its use on campus. Because ASL goes hand in hand with written and spoken English skills, students were advocating for ASL as the language used on campus, with equal emphasis that the command of written and spoken English is just as important to master.

Immigrants from other countries are required to learn English before they can become citizens. Are deaf and hard of hearing children to be less qualified? It is our moral obligation to ensure that our deaf and hard of hearing children develop fluency in BOTH languages. It is a myth that the use of sign language precludes development of English skills. So why is it that English is still being taught to our deaf and hard of hearing children using auditory-based techniques which work efficiently for hearing children, when it has been proven that many children with a hearing loss are more receptive to visual cues? What about Fitzgerald Key, a method for teaching the order of words in a sentence? What about rote memorization utilizing newer technologies? What about the good ole 3 R's utilizing video-based technology? Deaf Educational programs and advocates for deaf and hard of hearing children must insist that changes within the educational service delivery system be MORE accountable toward the models which are conducive to learning processes, while encouraging ASL and written and spoken skills as ESSENTIAL

requirements for deaf and hard of hearing children.

The educational system of today does not respond to the obvious gap in educational achievement by deaf and hard of hearing students. We do not like change. We do it like it has always been done. A system of advocacy must be developed on behalf of our children. We must not perpetuate a system that does not and cannot teach these skills with excellent results. We must EDUCATE the decision makers. We must insist that auditory-based teaching techniques alone will not succeed with our children and that all available tools must be employed to teach literacy skills to every deaf or hard of hearing child.

Gallaudet University is destined to give deaf and hard of hearing students an education which will enable them to fit in with mainstream America by giving them much needed tools to move on when they graduate from the University. Gallaudet must take the lead and work with deaf education programs (mainstreamed and deaf school programs) across the nation to provide a seamless teaching system to ensure that ALL deaf and hard of hearing children are exposed to a minimum set of academic standards before entering the post-secondary scene.

It was quite an honor to work with these outstanding Gallaudet students. They inspired me and give me hope for the future!

If I have seen farther than others, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants."

Sir Isaac Newton

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I met with the future leaders – the students themselves at Gallaudet. It is my hope through this new evolution they will use the lessons learned from this protest ... lessons of transparency and accountability must be the values for any deaf-related program, oppressive tactics (unintentionally or otherwise) must be addressed, communicated and resolved, in a proactive manner through effective communication at all times.

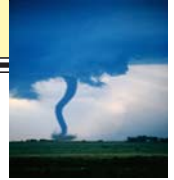
The students want a leader that knows how to get things done! There is a time when talking is over. There is a time to get things done. A leader knows where to go to get things moving. A leader needs an awareness of how things work in the world. A leader needs contacts and understanding of the ways to get world leaders to match stride with her/him. They want a “deep to the core” ASL proficient leader who comes from a deaf institution of education where there are stem cells of healthy deaf leaders to be nourished and grown.

This experience has been an eye-opener for me as I look at the local needs for our kids here at home. I see that we have many similar issues and feel we should hold ourselves to the same standards. We must do better for our children and for our future.

There are times we have an opportunity to do something right.....just because it is RIGHT TO THE VERY CORE! Hmmm.....yes. There is always a price to pay. We have already said “We don’t like change.” But change there must be! Are we willing? Or, are we the ones that don’t want change? Are we satisfied with what is happening to our kids, right here at home in Kentucky?

Emergency Email Alerts

Would you like to receive email alerts related to emergencies such as severe weather, national security, Amber alerts, etc? Visit www.emergencyemail.org today to sign up for the alerts you would like to receive.




Congratulations Mickie!



Micki Brunton, Miss Deaf Kentucky, was announced as 1st runner up in the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Miss Deaf America 2006-2008 Pageant. Micki grew up in Danville with her family. She worked at KCDHH during the summer as an intern and is now attending Eastern Kentucky University. Mickie is available for speaking engagements upon request. Contact Barbie Harris at (859) 239-7017 or berw@tmail.com to coordinate arrangements.

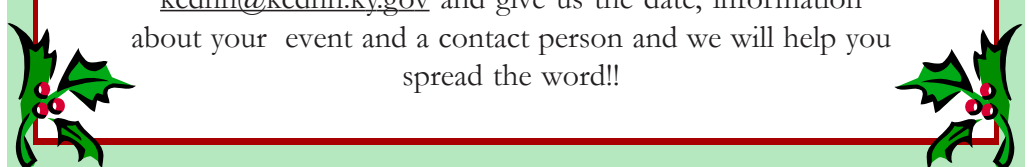
Miss South Dakota, Chelsea Tobin, was crowned Miss Deaf America 2006-2008. Miss Congeniality went to Miss Deaf Ohio, Teresa Gasaway, and 2nd runner up went to Miss Deaf Florida, Lisa Herbert. Congratulations to each of these young women who demonstrated outstanding leadership by participating in the Miss Deaf America event.



What's Up Kentucky?

Did you know that KCDHH has a calendar of events on our bulletin board: <http://www.kcdhh.ky.gov/bulletin/events.html>

We will post deaf or hard of hearing related events coming up in your area if we are aware of the dates. The events can be at schools, clubs or other social gatherings, etc. Please contact us at kcdhh@kcdhh.ky.gov and give us the date, information about your event and a contact person and we will help you spread the word!!



Documentary Chronicles 200 Years of Deaf Life in America

First Comprehensive Film on Deaf History Premieres on PBS March 21, 2007

"Through Deaf Eyes" is a two-hour HDTV documentary for PBS exploring nearly 200 years of Deaf life in America. The film presents the shared experiences of American history – family life, education, work, and community connections – from the perspective of deaf citizens. Interviews include community leaders, historians, and deaf Americans with diverse views on language use, technology and identity. Bringing a Deaf cinematic lens to the film are six artistic works by Deaf media artists and filmmakers. Poignant, sometimes humorous, these films draw on the media artists' own lives and are woven throughout the documentary. But the core of the film remains the larger story of Deaf life in America — a story of conflicts, prejudice and affirmation that reaches the heart of what it means to be human. "Through Deaf Eyes" will be broadcast nationally on PBS on Wednesday, March 21 at 9 p.m. ET (check local listings).

"Through Deaf Eyes" does not approach the topic of deaf history from the perspective of sentimentality or overcoming, nor does it deny the physical reality of being deaf. The documentary takes a straight-forward look at life for people who are part of the cultural-linguistic group who use American Sign Language and often define themselves as "Deaf" with a capital, and cultural, "D" and deaf people who, for a variety of reasons, do not identify with the Deaf cultural community. The history often shows that intersections between deaf and Deaf people are many and that oppression and discrimination are common experiences.

The film is full of surprises,

including a Deaf rock band. Little known are the many Deaf stories about attempts to be "cured" through religious healings, diving airplane rides, electrical impulses, and even the thrill of meeting a baseball hero. These puzzling events in the lives of Deaf people demonstrate a complex relationship with hearing society.

"Through Deaf Eyes" shows the broad sweep of U.S. history intersecting the experiences of Deaf people. Education has been perhaps the issue in this story. "Through Deaf Eyes" traces the evolution of deaf education, from the founding of the first school for the deaf in 1817 to the 1864 chartering of Gallaudet University, the only place that deaf people could earn a college degree in a signing environment, to the late-20th century "mainstreaming" movement.

"Through Deaf Eyes" explores the enduring linguistic debate on how to educate deaf children, examining the reasons behind it and leaders on both sides of the argument. The strongest proponent of oral education was Alexander Graham Bell. He argued that deaf children should be instructed using a pure oral method, with no signs.



Further, Bell stated that deaf people should not teach deaf children, as they would introduce sign language and could not instruct during speech lessons. His ideas were widely accepted.

Bell studied eugenics, the science of improving a species. In 1884 he

warned that formation of a "deaf race" was underway and pointed to the growing number of Deaf clubs, churches, schools, and social events. Bell suggested that deaf people should not marry each other and proffered ways to prevent connections between deaf people.

"Through Deaf Eyes" brings to light the efforts by Deaf leadership to address the systematic suppression of language and other barriers. The National Association of the Deaf, founded in 1880, began to preserve language on film. Their charismatic president, George W. Veditz, spoke out forcefully on issues of language, education, and employment for deaf people. By 1910 the organization



feared that sign language would be gone and filmed master signers in order to preserve "the natural language

of the deaf." Veditz and many other leaders argued that oral communication alone was inadequate.

Through much of the 20th century, most deaf children started their education in an oral classroom, though often signing was still the method of communicating in school dormitories. It was not until the 1960s that research into the grammar and structure of signing prompted many to begin to see that visual signs were indeed a language. William Stokoe, a hearing professor at Gallaudet, researched hand shapes, movements, and placement of signs and came to a radical conclusion at the time: that sign is a language, with all the richness and nuance of spoken languages. This revelation would prompt greater analysis of language, community, and identity.

Technology also played a hand in

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social change for deaf people. The invention of teletype machines that could communicate across phone lines made it possible for deaf people to “talk” to each other. Captioning provided new access to information such as the evening news. Technology also created controversy. “Through Deaf Eyes” explores the issues surrounding cochlear implants, now used by more deaf children and adults than ever before. The film explores both sides of the issue, presenting frank conversations with deaf people who use cochlear implants and those who do not, and with parents who often struggle to make the best decisions for their deaf child.

Deaf experiences have most often been portrayed in film as isolated and tragic, but Deaf life burst upon the popular culture with TV and stage presentations by the National Theatre of the Deaf in the 1960s. Later, the success of “Children of a Lesser God,” first on Broadway and then in a feature film for which Marlee Matlin won an Oscar, further brought Deaf life and American Sign Language to the public.

In one of the more dramatic and inspirational events in this chronicle, students, faculty, staff and alumni at Gallaudet University protest the 1988 selection of a hearing president, demanding a “Deaf President Now.” The protesters gain widespread public support for this civil rights struggle, and their demands are met with the appointment of Dr. I. King Jordan in what was a galvanizing moment for Deaf society. “Through Deaf Eyes” offers an



inside perspective by some of the protest leaders.

In the rapidly changing world the Deaf community has experienced revolutions of place, language, identity, and access. These revolutions have deep historic roots and profound individual impact. Personal interpretations of Deaf life are brought to the film by the six filmmakers: Wayne Betts, Renee Visco, Tracey Salaway, Kimby Caplan, Arthur Luhn, and Adrean Mangiardi. These extraordinary artists introduce a Deaf frame of reference behind the documentary camera. To most people, “deaf” means to not hear. To Deaf people and these Deaf filmmakers, it means much more.

A comprehensive Web site, found at <http://www.pbs.org> accompanies the film. The site includes interviews with the deaf filmmakers whose work is featured in the documentary, while also inviting viewers to submit their own stories, photographs, and films. These will become part of the archival collection of Gallaudet University. A companion book is being published by Gallaudet.

Major funding for “Through Deaf Eyes” is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, The Annenberg Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. Private individuals have also contributed to the funding of this project. The extensive outreach campaign is funded in part by Sign Language Associates. Outreach partners are the National Association of the Deaf, Gallaudet University, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology, and California State University-Northridge. As part of the outreach campaign, numerous local organizations, some in association with their public television stations, will

mount events and discussions exploring the issues raised in the film.

The film was inspired by the exhibition “History Through Deaf Eyes,” curated by Jack R. Gannon at Gallaudet University. “Through Deaf Eyes” is a production of WETA Washington, D.C., and Florentine Films/Hott Productions in association with Gallaudet University. The producer is Emmy and Peabody



Award winner Larry Hott. The editor is Diane Garey. The writer is Ken Chowder. The executive producers are Karen Kenton and Dalton Delan,

WETA. The project director at Gallaudet is Jean Bergey. Senior advisor to the project is Harry G. Lang, professor in the department of Teacher and Research Education, National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology, and the author of many books on deaf history.

WETA Washington, D.C., is the third-largest producing station for public television. WETA's other productions and co-productions include “The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer,” “Washington Week with Gwen Ifill and National Journal,” “In Performance at the White House,” and documentaries by filmmaker Ken Burns, including “The Civil War,” and coming September 2007, “The War.” Sharon Percy Rockefeller is president and CEO. More information on WETA and its programs and services is available on the Web site at <http://www.weta.org>.



First Step in Gallaudet Revolution?

written by Kelby N. Brick, Esq.

To many at Gallaudet University, the removal of Jane Fernandes as incoming president represented merely the first step in reforming a repressive system that excluded stakeholders from the governing process. The Deaf President Now protests in 1988 installed a deaf person as president, but they did not reform this almost 150-year-old entrenched bureaucracy of paternalism.

Gallaudet's governing system has been led by a self-perpetuating board that appoints its own replacements with very little external input. University bylaws prevent the board of trustees from receiving any communication or information from the campus community independent from the president's office.

Moreover, the university's governing system was set up in an era when deaf people had very little say in how they were to be governed - and were viewed as incompetent.

Such exclusion of stakeholders from the governing process reinforces institutional "audism" - discriminatory attitudes and practices based on the inability to hear. Because of limited interaction with the campus community, board members have not been exposed to its true diversity and thus have made decisions in a vacuum. Only a minority of board members are university alumni, which underscores their limited knowledge of campus concerns.

The campus community became frustrated because it was unable to get the board to address critical issues and hold the administration accountable for numerous failures. Sparked by groups of minority students objecting to the exclusion of a prominent black candidate from an all-white group of finalists, the protest quickly attracted supporters who had their own exposure to a governing system that seemed autocratic and unresponsive.

The protest then morphed into a characteristic revolution underpinned by a long list of grievances: systematic institutional discrimination (including racism and audism), rapidly falling academic achievement (as noted by a federal government report), repeated campus security misconduct, and administrative intimidation and retaliation.

Last May, at the beginning of the protest, a team of three outside mediators was brought in to facilitate communication. The administration agreed to systemwide reforms - for example, in the areas of diversity, communication and accountability - but these were ignored, fueling the eruption last month.

When officials of an autocratic system sense they are losing power, they frequently turn to propaganda, restrictive policies on information and physical coercion to retain power and suppress dissent.

Those outside Gallaudet were confused by what was happening on campus, and this confusion was reinforced by the administration's implementation of a disingenuous media strategy: branding dissent as terrorism. University officials argued that there should be a "new order of deaf people" and claimed the campus community was afraid of technology - ignoring the fact that this campus revolution was led by many people who, like Ms. Fernandes, grew up reading lips before learning American Sign Language later in life.

The administration sought to claim that protesters were unreasonably charging Ms. Fernandes with not being "deaf enough." When this was exposed as a red herring, the administration instituted - under the guise of safety - a campuswide policy restricting public assembly and discourse. When this failed to stop the protests, the administration turned to mass arrests of students (known on campus as Black Friday) and other displays of dangerous brute force, such as the bulldozing of students' overnight shelters without checking first to ensure those structures were vacant.

The removal of Ms. Fernandes, who had been one of the top officials at Gallaudet for the past 11 years, is seen as only the first step. Gallaudet now faces a defining moment. The board needs to move expeditiously to become more inclusive and transparent, while demanding measurable accountability from the university administration. The campus community needs to return to its task of teaching and learning while working with the board in developing the kind of "shared governance" system that has been instituted in so many other colleges and universities.

Perhaps the person most critical to the university's future will be the outgoing president, who has two months left in his presidency. President I. King Jordan can renounce the propaganda and lead, through example, the process of forgiveness. He can bring together stakeholders to reform the system. His lasting legacy - and to a lesser extent, Gallaudet's future and viability - will be determined by his conduct and decisions in the next two months.

The outgoing president can determine whether the recent crisis was a revolution for a better Gallaudet - or a rebellion that still needs to be put down, along with the university itself.

NOTE: Kelby Brick, a deaf attorney and Gallaudet alumnus, is former director for law and advocacy at the National Association of the Deaf and co-author of "Legal Rights: The Guide for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People."

November 2, 2006 - The Sun - Baltimore, MD

Taking the Future in Our Hands!

photos by Dick Moore



Software Changes: CapTel Keeps You Current



From time-to-time, enhancements may be made to the CapTel phone to take advantage of new telephone capabilities or to fine-tune existing features. For your convenience, the CapTel phone is designed to be updated over the telephone line, without having to send your phone in for service. These enhancements are sent right over the telephone line directly to your CapTel phone.

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- Make sure the red light above the "CAPTION" button is lit
- Press the menu button next to the "Update CapTel?" arrow

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Season Greetings from KCDHH Staff

